

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. Claims 1-7, 11-17, and 19-20 are rejected, and claim 21 is new. Claims 1 and 16 are currently amended, and such amendments are fully supported by the specification and drawings. For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants assert that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-7, 11, 13-14, 16, 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sealfon U.S. 5,261,882. As set forth in more detail below, the reference fails to describe every element of every claim as required by MPEP § 2131, and therefore the rejection is unsupported by the art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 1 recites “a restoring means rotatably mounted inside said drive mechanism,” and claim 16 recites “said spring being rotatably mounted inside said drive wheel.” In contrast, as seen in Figure 8 the negator spring 28 of Sealfon is clearly situated outside spindle 68. Col. 4, lines 33-41, Col. 5, lines 4-5 (“[N]egator spring 28 is adapted to be uncoiled from spool 72 and extended from location 70 in encircling relation about the circular configuration 82 consisting of the individual spheres 80...” and the “interconnected spheres 82 track” about spindle 68). Accordingly, Sealfon fails to teach a restoring means rotatably mounted inside a drive mechanism as claimed.

For at least this reason, Sealfon fails to anticipate independent claims 1 and 16.

Dependent Claim 19

Claim 19 recites the restoring means being “adjacently coupled to said drive mechanism.” Applicants previously argued that the Sealfon reference fails to teach this limitation:

In contrast, the negator spring 28 of Sealfon is not adjacent to spindle 68; the negator spring 28 is spaced away from spindle 68 by spheres 82. See Fig. 8. Specifically, the negator spring 28 is not adjacently coupled to spindle 68, but rather it is attached to the spindle whereby first “the

negator spring [28] end 88 is connected by screw 90 into a threaded opening 92 in a distal located sphere 80,” col. 4, lines 38-41, and then “screw 90 is threadably tightened in the tapped hole ... of the spindle assembly 68,” col. 5, lines 33-35; Fig. 8.

Applicants’ Response dated 5/13/05. In response, Examiner merely states “A drive mechanism (68) is adjacently coupled (via screw 90) to the flexible force transfer means (80)...” Office Action dated 7/20/05, Page 3. Such response does not address Applicants’ argument, nor is the ground of rejection “clearly developed” as required MPEP § 706.07.

Applicants assert that if the word “adjacently” in claim 19 is given any weight, it is clear that claim 19 is not anticipated by the Sealfon reference because the negator spring 28 of Sealfon is not adjacent to spindle 68. Rather, negator spring 28 is spaced away from spindle 68 by spheres 82. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of claim 19.

Dependent Claim 21

New claim 21 recites “said flexible force transferring means is mounted directly on an outer circumference of said drive mechanism.” The Sealfon reference fails to teach this limitation. In contrast, the spheres 80/82 of Sealfon are clearly supported by an inner circumference of spindle 68. Figs. 2 and 8. Specifically, spheres 80 are received by inner rim 108 of the spindle 68. Col. 5, lines 21-55 (“each sphere 80 has a guide groove 78 which, during tracking of the assembled spheres 82 about spindle 68 receives in a projected relation a rim 108 of the spindle, as best illustrated in FIG. 8.”). Indeed, Examiner agreed that screw 90, which is connected to the spindle 68 at the same location as are the spheres 80, is “coupled...to an inner surface (concave surface) of the drive mechanism [68].” Office Action dated 7/20/05, Page 5.

For at least these reasons, Sealfon fails to anticipate new claim 21.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sealfon in view of Updike et al. (US 4,568,335). Neither Sealfon nor Updike, nor the combination thereof, teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 17. Claim 17 is allowable as being dependent from claim 16 for the reasons set forth above.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sealfon in view of Douglas et al (US 6,482,186). Neither Sealfon nor Douglas, nor the combination thereof, teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 12. Claim 12 is allowable as being dependent from claim 1 for the reasons set forth above.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sealfon in view of Utterberg et al. (US 5,112,311). Neither Sealfon nor Utterberg, nor the combination thereof, teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 15. Claim 15 is allowable as being dependent from claim 1 for the reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

Applicant submits herewith a Petition for a One-Month Extension of Time, along with request for continued examination (RCE). Checks are enclosed to cover the requisite fees. The Commissioner is also hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments associated with this response, the petition or the RCE to Deposit Account No. 04-1420.

This application now stands in allowable form, and reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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